IN THE CLAIMS:

- 7. (amended) An isolated nucleic acid encoding the polypeptide of Claim 1, and fragments thereof.
- 14. (amended) An expression vector comprising the nucleic acid of Claim 7.
- 16. (amended) A method for producing the polypeptide of Claim 1, which comprises the steps of:
- (1) culturing a host cell comprising the polypeptide under a condition suitable for the expression of the polypeptide; and
 - (2) recovering the polypeptide from the host cell culture.
- 17. (amended) An antibody specifically binding to the polypeptide of Claim1.
- 19. (amended) A method for detecting the presence of the nucleic acid of Claim 7 in a mammal, which comprises the steps of:
 - (1) extracting total RNA from a sample obtained from the mammal;
- (2) amplifying the RNA by reverse transcriptase-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) to obtain a cDNA sample;
- (3) hybridizing the cDNA sample with the nucleic acid comprising the polypeptide; and
 - (4) detecting the amount of the hybridized sample.

23. (amended) A method for detecting the presence of the polypeptide of Claim 1 in a mammal, which comprises the steps of contacting an antibody that specifically binds to the polypeptide with protein samples extracted from the mammal, and detecting the amount of antibody-antigen binding samples.

<u>REMARKS</u>

The above amendatory action is taken solely for the purpose of avoiding claim fees that would otherwise accrue due to the presence of multiple dependent claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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